

The Soul of Sigosiire

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There exists a place – not just on the map of Kyenjojo District, but carved deep into the hearts of those who ever walked its dusty paths, laughed at its jokes, or danced under its candle-lit skies. That place is Sigosiire Trading Centre. The Meaning Behind the Name "Sigosiire"

The name Sigosiire originates from a local saying which means:

"Go after you have ground your millet."

This name carries deep wisdom and reflects the nature of the place. It was born from the reality that the joy, fun, and liveliness found in Sigosiire could easily make someone lose track of time. People would go there for a short visit and end up spending the whole day—laughing, socializing, dancing, or enjoying the vibrant community life.

Because of this, the elders advised:

“Grind your millet first before going to Sigosiire, because you might return late. And if you haven’t prepared, you’ll sleep hungry!”

So Sigosiire wasn’t just a trading centre—it was a place so full of warmth and happiness that people forgot time itself. The name is both a warning and a compliment: prepare well, because you may not want to leave once you arrive.

A name so simple yet carrying the weight of generations, memories, and a joy that words can only try to describe.

From its humble beginnings in Katumba Village, under the wise and grounded leadership of the late Mr. Aliseni Kalyebara (1986–2024), Sigosiire wasn’t just a trading centre – it was home. A heartbeat. A rhythm of life that pulsed through every blade of grass swaying in the wind from Kigumba and Kahyoro tea plantations. That wind – oh, that wind! It didn’t just cool the skin; it carried stories, secrets, and songs from the past.

Where It All Began

Back in the day – and I mean the day, not this generation of TikTok and tinted windows – Sigosiire had just seven grass-thatched shops. Not malls, not arcades – just humble huts with floors pounded hard by bare feet and hearts full of hope.

Two shops stood on the lower side of the road, led by legends like Selegio Bihwaakabe (Rwabajungu) and the late Selevesta Kandole, who sold everything from sugar to stories. Up the road, five more shops by Bitaniirwa, Kitembo Asa (Sedume), late Sanyu, and others stood proud, rain or shine. These were no ordinary shops – they were cafes, gossip stations, disco halls, and for some... therapy rooms.

On Sundays, the town lit up. People came from Bukomba, Kyaibona, Mukitongo, Kabungo, Rwenkuba, Kikeeya, and Mukafunda (then Mukagongo) after church to sip kwete, chew roasted coffee beans, or eat pancakes (tumuyas) from roadside stalls.

Where Business Was Heart and Hustle

Now listen – this wasn't a place of briefcases and business cards. No. This was the era of amaronde (shackers) for hunting dogs, weaving pins (empindo), saucepans, and even roasted coffee beans being sold by Byabandi and Ruhunga, whose stall was the nearest thing to a hardware supermarket. They sold everything short of dreams – but even those, you could borrow over a drink.

Every shop was a multi-purpose centre – by day, a shop; by night, a bar, dance floor, radio station, and cinema. Music was played on battery-powered cassette radios, the kind where the DJ had to shout, "Please no noise, let the cassette be heard!" And heard it was – the whole town danced under a candle flame, as the night whispered with joy and sometimes, love.

Fights? Oh yes. What is a true African holiday without a few arguments over spilled kwete or stolen glances? Easter, Independence Day, Christmas – you could be sure of one thing: a fight. And if you lived near the Chairman's house, then you got the best version – live commentary from the accused themselves, giving their version before the village "court".

The Borehole and the Buzz

At the heart of Sigosiire was not a bank or a church – but a borehole. They called it "Hamulikoon". It wasn't just where we fetched water; it was where friendships were made, where girls giggled over secrets, and where boys challenged each other in who could carry the heaviest jerrycan.

Evenings? Crowded. Laughter. Teasing. Sometimes a quarrel. But that borehole? It gave life to the centre. It was our Facebook, our marketplace, our Parliament.

Sunday Photos and Kodak Dreams

Now picture this – your mother, in a gomesi, holding a bottle of soda or a plastic flower, pretending to talk on the shopkeeper's radio – and click! Photo taken by Cholo, Karoole, Canada, or Yuda. These were no ordinary cameramen; they were magicians capturing joy.

But you had to wait. Oh, you had to wait – a week or two for that picture to be printed from Kodak studios in Fort Portal. And when you finally received it? You guarded it like a degree certificate.

The Match of the Year – Every Sunday

Football? You've never seen football like Sigosiire football. No boots. No jerseys. Just one team shirtless to show difference in teams. If you showed up drunk from the bar – no problem! You could still be picked as a goalkeeper like Kyaligaba was.

Legendary players like Kapola, Rusoke, Rwakyaka, Beyeza, Kibuuka, Switzen, Asimwe Bala, Bagambe and others ruled the dusty fields of Katumba Kelezia. Later, when Katuramu Bob sponsored uniforms and balls, new stars rose: Rwabutara Dady Dady, Asaba Wamala, Charles Mwandara, Twikirize Osama, Sam Chotara, Twesige Macaica, Solomon, Herbert Wamala, Ngaaju, Joseph Tugume, Pat Kijumba and more.

No one cared if you had boots. If you had Vibe and two legs – you played.

Time Changes But the Soul Stays

As time passed, mud and wattle gave way to bricks and iron sheets. Grass-thatched roofs became metal shields against the rain. New businesses sprouted, and some old giants –

Byamukama, Bikubire, Behuuma, Kyalimpa, Sunday Kazimire, Mwesige Mzee, Chotara Kaliika, Roza Ekigejja, Isingoma Paul, Sam Chotara, Twikirize, Adruf Mudondoba, Mugisa Kazimire. – moved on to the land of peace.

But even as new names and buildings came, the spirit of Sigosiire remained.

You see, names like Mwesige Koiboza, Asiimwe Ominioza, Kandole, Kiiza Kyakandole, Bitaniirwe, Kisémbó sedume, Julius, Kabeyi, Yuda, Kawa Iranga (Mporampora), Katuramu Waragi, Pendensi, Ateenyi Frora, Asaba Kapopo,

Asiimwe Butime, Kaseenya, Lawule Kisuumu, Isingoma Garabagaraba, Katuramu Rutabwoosa, Isingoma Kacwamiti, Mbabazi Cumita, Kasangaki Nyangirisi, Kahwa Kyakaangi,

Kahwa Kicumuro, Baguma bagaleta, Monday Sample, Kayooka, Businge Jamaica, Friday Rwija, Erimosi, Kasija Tindyamuhogo, Acleo, Isingoma Paul,

Ronald Kireju, Simon, Kaija Kyakarakara, Nyakaisiki, Kadiidi, Kyamuhogo, Abesiga, Bomeera, Robert Kalebule, Kisémbó kyaitongo, Bwogo, Kuniira, Mugenyi kifundukwa, Siira, Perebooso, Rujonjo, Osama, Kyagwamwoha, Tiguhonoka, Kyaligoonza Kifuuzi, Tinkamalirwe, Kafaila, Kisémbó Mukonogumu, Mukidi, Gahombere, Mugume Kasamaaki, Rugumayo, Muoise, Kazooba, Bakenga, Omumerika, Kato Zijaire, Roben, God Kandole, Kalyebara Junior, BBala Asiimwe, Kalipso, – they don't just live in memory. They are Sigosiire.

And Now...

New breeds now carry the mantle. The children who fetched water are now parents. The boys who played football in shirts and slippers now cheer from the sidelines. But Sigosiire... oh, Sigosiire remains.

A place that taught us joy wasn't in money but in community, in jokes shared over kwete, in dances under candlelight, and goals scored in trousers.

To those who lived it – your hearts are forever tattooed with its stories.

To those who missed it – oh, you truly missed what it meant to live.

Sigosiire wasn't just a trading centre.

It was life,

It was love,

It was legend.

And may its spirit never fade.

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